

surmise of a drift right across the Polar Sea was correct. In a lecture delivered before the Geographical Society in Christiania, on September 28, 1892, I alluded to some of these inquiries.* I laid stress on the fact that on considering the thickness and extent of the drift-ice in the seas on both sides of the Pole, one cannot but be struck by the fact that while the ice on the Asiatic side, north of the Siberian coast, is comparatively thin (the ice in which the *Jeannette* drifted was, as a rule, not more than from 7 to 10 feet thick), that on the other side, which comes drifting from the north in the sea between Greenland and Spitzbergen, is remarkably massive, and this, notwithstanding that the sea north of Siberia is one of the coldest tracts on the earth. This, I suggested, could be explained only on the assumption that the ice is constantly drifting from the Siberian coast, and that, while passing through the unknown and cold sea there is time for it to attain its enormous thickness, partly by freezing, partly by the constant packing that takes place as the floes screw themselves together.

I further mentioned in the same lecture that the mud found on this drift-ice seemed to point to a Siberian origin. I did not at the time attach great importance to this fact, but on a further examination of the deposits I had collected during my Greenland expedition it appeared that it could scarcely come from anywhere else.

* See the *Society's Annual*, III., 1892, p. 91.